

LATIN-AMERICAN NEWS ASSN.
1409 Broadway New York

OPEN LETTER

to the

Editor of the Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO, ILL.



INDEPENDENCE MONUMENT IN MEXICO CITY
Built with millions that should have been used to solve
the agrarian problem.

Dear Sir:

Allow me to make a few comments on your last Sunday's (Oct. 15) editorial, in which you assert that Mexico is the exposed flank of the United States.

The belicose attitude which a large number of publications in the United States have assumed is based on a conception of the Mexican people which cannot be more incorrect.

You have been assuming that you possess conclusive facts on Mexican sociology, as derived from observations made by people who have been able to study certain economic phenomena, certain political features that have been evident in different periods of the Mexican history; but who do not possess the ability to understand that there is a great human cause of justice in the endeavors of the Mexican masses.

You speak, with more frequency than is necessary, of the wealth which foreigners have amassed in Mexican soil, and you concentrate the obligations which this nation and other advanced countries of the world have toward Mexico, in the single fact that such nations must impose their authority on the Mexican people, and compel respect towards that wealth.

The pity of it all is that you seem to firmly believe that such doctrine is bound to succeed, and that sooner or later, the United States of America will dictate to Mexico and to all the Latin-American race.

You seem to be blind to the gigantic movement that is going on everywhere, but particularly in Mexico, against the long-lived rule of "special interests."

And the more you think of the military power of this nation imposing itself upon Mexican life, the more prejudiced you become.

There is no other interpretation possible, of the ideas you expound and support in the Tribune, which seem the chorus part of the tragic-comedy of Hearstian megalomania.

Not only is this form of thought wrong, but it entails the perdition of America. For America is now tired of the "iron" hand and needs—more urgently than can be imagined—a sane current of understanding between the peoples that inhabit this continent.

The CONQUEST of Mexico is an impossible undertaking. The Mexican people have been tried in this hideous experiment of CONQUEST, time after time; but all of the conquerors have failed miserably.

Spain employed all the methods that could be devised, and applied them with the most ingenious perversity. But they failed. The Inquisition failed. The policy of the "closed door:" the policy of catechism, that of paternalism, and of hypocrisy: they *all failed*.

There is something in the blood of the Mexicans, whether you believe it or not, which makes them feel with the utmost certainty, that their lands, their endeavors, their loyalty, their ingenuity, have invariably been imposed upon, plundered and abused by every one who came, shielding themselves with the threat of intervention, occupation, conquest.

Elena de Montijo, a Spaniard, astute and charming, caused the ruin of Napoleon III, by making him believe that it was possible to conquer Mexico. Napoleon failed and paid the price for his mistake, at Sedan.

The United States took a large part of Mexican territory by force of arms. Mexico lost, and the

United States were wise to stop there at that time, for, had they attempted the wholesale conquest of Mexico, encouraged by the success of its first attempt, the results might have been disastrous for the future of America.

Modern capitalists and modern adventurers of all sorts, many of them Americans, obtained numerous concessions from Porfirio Diaz; the majority of those concessions CANNOT bear the light of day; but the grantees, always thinking that inasmuch as the dictator gave them the lands, the oil, the timber, the mines, the waters of the rivers, the control of certain commodities which the Mexicans believe belong by right to the people of Mexico, and which right they are absolutely decided to support and defend with their lives. But those grantees boast that such enormous wealth, such immeasurable natural resources, ARE THEIR PRIVATE PROPERTY!

This Mr. Editor, is the enormity, the lie, the astounding vicious principle which you, perhaps unconsciously, are supporting in your warlike editorials. This is the error on which all your reasoning is wrecked.

This is the far-reaching propaganda which you are endeavoring to foster, by means of your editorials in order to convince this peaceful, industrious people of the United States that it is their duty to fill their minds with contempt for the unfortunate but often heroic, and frequently abused people of Mexico.

How is it that all your culture, all your experience and all your ability as a publisher has been of no avail to enlighten you in regard to the Mexican problem in its manifold relations with your very existence as a nation, and to make you appreciate that it is more than anything else, a psychological problem?

How is it that you are ignorant of the fact that the United States of America has not, as yet, begun its wonderful task, its ONLY MERITORIOUS task, that of becoming the moral leader and the friendly teacher of all the Indo-Latin peoples south of the Rio Grande?

These peoples have known only your *junkers*, your fortune seekers, your slave-drivers, your get-rich-quick schemers of all sorts and varieties, many of them NOT WANTED here because they were crooked or because they played politics in the way in which your crooks usually play that game. These peoples south of the Rio Grande, Mr. Editor, know very few indeed of your upright, honest, sound business men; and you can be sure, as all of us Mexicans are, that such men are honored and respected there as here, and that they have always been honored and respected by the Mexicans.

It is distressing that you do not understand these truths, and it is appalling that you should think it easier to create fear in the bosom of the great number of Mexicans by means of a display of force, than to inspire respect and friendship by means of the invaluable assistance of your good moral qualities.

It is sad that you cannot see the facility with which you could protect the Mexican flank (your weak flank), with the assistance and determined co-operation of millions of Mexicans against any possible foe; the good will with which your armies would be permitted to enter Mexico acclaimed by the Mexican people en masse, as the soldiers of liberty and justice, and heartily supported by the valiant Mexican army, against any or many European crowned heads, IF only you could be cured of your piteous blindness; IF only you knew something about the things of which you are most absurdly ignorant: MEXICAN SOCIOLOGY.

Your friendship toward all of the Indo-Latin population of America and *not* your feverish ambition for the possession of the natural resources of Mexico and South America, means the salvation of America and the EDUCATION OF AMERICA.

Your tongue is almost tired of repeating those apparently very convincing words which we hear you utter every day, namely; bandits, outlaws, assassins, greasers, treacherous chieftains, etc. You use these epithets to designate Mexico and her nationals. Your pride feels satisfied at the energy of your contempt; your vanity rejoices in the conclusiveness of the assertions which you support with what you consider convincing proofs, and you then permit the weight of your haughty judgment to crush a people whom you consider helpless and destitute of hope.

You say PEON and the rictus of your mouth is the same which distorted the face of the Spaniard of the eighteenth century, who considered himself as the divinely appointed master of the Indian.

You say AMERICAN PROPERTY, and the nasal sound of these imperious words seems to invite the swelling of chests and to lead automatically to think of guns and dreadnoughts. You say MEXICAN PEOPLE, and all the mistakes and misery of this groping human nature of ours appear enlarged before your eyes, which contract with an expression of unutterable contempt.

Still, there is hardly an American who has lived in Mexico, even during this difficult period, who is blind and prejudiced and ignorant enough to deny that he has been charmed by the beauty and gentleness and unquestionable mental values of the Mexican people as a whole, since the first moments of his visit in that republic.

It takes but a few minutes for a well-meaning American and a Mexican to talk to each other and to become very good friends.

There are friendships between Mexicans and Americans which have lasted a lifetime. At the present time, there are Americans by the score who will not leave Mexico, and who have nothing to fear from the Mexicans, because those Americans CAN UNDERSTAND.

The Mexican social revolution against the brutality of the Catholic church, against the injustice of special privileges, and of foreign monopolies, is a revolution that no human power can stop. The violence employed and the atrocities committed are no more grievous than those committed by any other liberty-seeking people upon this earth, and looking at it from an impartial point of view, it is an amazing fact that in the midst of the absolute disorganization which followed the downfall of Huerta and the rebellion of Villa against Carranza, a government could be evolved and all the services of civilized life be quickly set afoot.

You seem unaware of the fact that, during the darkest and most afflictive stages of the struggle, when different factions were contending, when the most absolute financial depression embarrassed the whole of our national life, the plans for the reform of the public schools of the country were formed and carried out successfully.

You DO NOT KNOW that to-day there are TWENTY TIMES as many SCHOOLS in Mexico as there were in the times of the dictator, Porfirio Diaz.

You never refer to the tremendous difficulties that the Mexican people have overcome in order to force the old aristocrat, and the old, grouchy, libidinous, fanatic "hacendado" into the necessity of working with his own hands, in order to merit the respect of his former slaves, to whom he can shout his orders no longer, and whose daughters he no longer can ruin without facing trial.

I say to you, Mr. Editor, of the Tribune: You know

nothing about Mexico, and the contempt with which you express yourself in regard to the right to independence of that nation, is positively disappointing.

Mr. Hearst has succeeded in making his name honestly, openly and heartily hated throughout Mexico. The rich and the poor, the ignorant and the educated, the big and the small, ALL OF THEM, know Mr. Hearst as the most noisy, extravagant and gasconesque of American junkers.

You have started with a firm step to walk in Mr. Hearst's path, and that is your own sacred privilege. But allow me to tell you that there will be no such a thing as the conquest of Mexico by the American people, because the great majority of the American people has nothing in common with the Wall Street money fiends; because the American people, as I have been able to observe during the many years it has been my privilege to live among them, is a people which loves justice, despite the fact that the modern fever for accumulating wealth possesses the whole nation and despite the fact that the spirit of gain which also has attacked you and me—permeates the most praiseworthy endeavors of this country and many European nations, equally well-intentioned.

I know that the American people is confronted at the present time by problems almost as tremendous and baffling as those which the Mexican people is trying to solve.

I know that at the bottom of the popular feeling in these two nations, there exists that human quality of sympathy which will survive all the efforts to smother it made by the junkers, those odious traffickers on international hatreds.

And I know that the Mexican people is unconquerable, because the Mexican people forms one of the most patriotic and liberty-loving nations of the world.

M. DEL CARPIO.